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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

March 2026

Lake/Sumter Edition - Monthly

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of Your Senses

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MYTHS
DEBUNKED

VASCULAR AND
THORACIC SURGERY
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It's your heart. It should be personal.

And that's how I treat it.

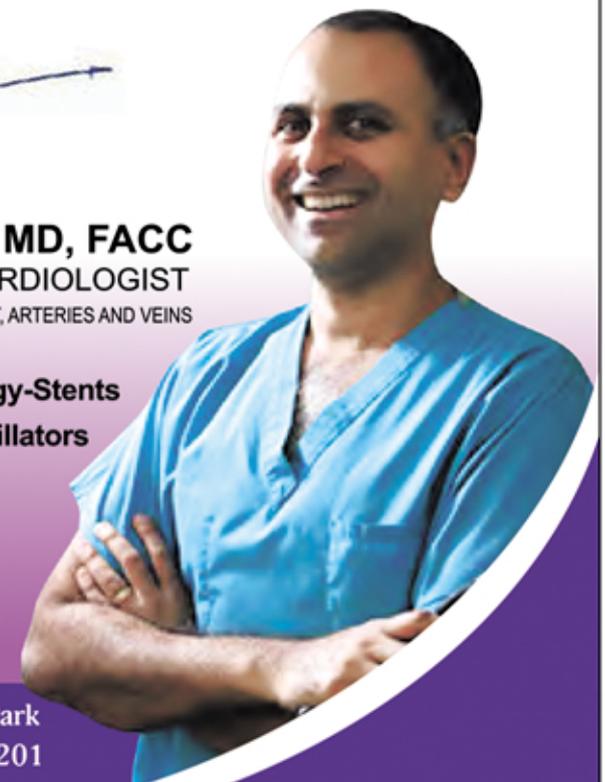
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TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR PELVIC HEALTH WITH Emsella IN LEESBURG, FL

Pelvic floor health is a topic that affects millions of people, yet it often remains undiscussed due to embarrassment or lack of awareness. Weakened pelvic floor muscles can lead to urinary incontinence, reduced bladder control, and diminished quality of life. Fortunately, modern technology has brought forward innovative solutions that address these concerns with dignity and effectiveness. Emsella, available at My Wellness Studio Medical Spa in Leesburg, FL, represents a breakthrough in noninvasive pelvic floor therapy that is changing lives without surgery, discomfort, or downtime.

Understanding Pelvic Floor Challenges

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles that support the bladder, bowel, and reproductive organs. Over time, these muscles can weaken due to various factors including childbirth, aging, hormonal changes, obesity, and chronic straining. When these muscles lose their strength and tone, the consequences can be frustrating and life-altering. Many people find themselves dealing with stress incontinence, which causes leakage during activities like coughing, sneezing, laughing, or exercising. Others experience urge incontinence, characterized by sudden and intense needs to urinate.

These challenges affect both women and men, though they are particularly common among women who have given birth or gone through menopause. Traditional approaches to strengthening the pelvic floor have included Kegel exercises, physical therapy, medications, and in severe cases, surgical intervention. While these methods can be effective, they often require significant time, effort, or come with risks and recovery periods that many people wish to avoid.

How Emsella Works

Emsella offers a revolutionary alternative that harnesses the power of high-intensity focused electromagnetic technology to stimulate pelvic floor muscles. During a treatment session, you simply sit fully clothed on the Emsella chair while the device delivers thousands of supramaximal contractions to the pelvic floor muscles. These contractions are far more intense and numerous than what could be achieved through voluntary exercise alone.

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A single thirty-minute session produces the equivalent of approximately 11,000 Kegel exercises, providing deep and comprehensive muscle stimulation that promotes strengthening and toning. This targeted approach helps restore neuromuscular control, improve muscle tone, and enhance overall pelvic floor function.

The Benefits of Choosing Emsella

One of the most appealing aspects of Emsella is its completely noninvasive nature. There are no needles, no anesthesia, and no surgical incisions involved. Patients remain fully clothed throughout the treatment, which helps maintain comfort and dignity. Sessions typically last about thirty minutes, and most people can return to their normal activities immediately afterward with no recovery time needed.

Results from Emsella treatments are often noticeable within just a few sessions, with optimal outcomes typically achieved after a series of six treatments scheduled over the course of several weeks. Many patients report significant improvements in bladder control, reduced leakage episodes, and enhanced confidence in their daily activities. Beyond addressing incontinence, strengthening the pelvic floor can also contribute to improved intimacy and overall pelvic wellness.

Why Choose My Wellness Studio Medical Spa in Leesburg, FL

When seeking treatment for something as personal as pelvic health, choosing the right provider matters immensely. My Wellness Studio Medical Spa in Leesburg, FL, offers expert care in a warm, welcoming

setting designed entirely around your comfort and well-being. The experienced team understands the sensitive nature of pelvic floor concerns and provides compassionate, judgment-free care that puts you at ease from the moment you walk through the door.

From advanced skin treatments and body sculpting to confidence-boosting wellness solutions like Emsella, every service at My Wellness Studio is thoughtfully tailored to your individual goals. The team combines the latest technology with a gentle, personalized approach to help you look and feel your best. Here, your beauty and wellness journey is fully supported, your results are real and measurable, and your experience is truly exceptional.

Taking control of your pelvic health does not have to mean enduring invasive procedures or lengthy recoveries. With Emsella at My Wellness Studio Medical Spa, you can reclaim your confidence and improve your quality of life through a dignified, effective solution. Contact the team today to schedule your consultation and learn more about how this innovative treatment can help you live more freely and comfortably. Your path to better pelvic health and renewed confidence starts here.



DR. SHIREEN DHANANI

Dr. Dhanani is always keeping up-to-date with the latest advancements in dentistry enabling her to provide her patients with the best quality of care. She dedicates herself to numerous continuing education hours each year and offers all phases of Cosmetic, Implant (both surgical placement and restorative) and Esthetic dentistry including Botox and Juvéderm dermal fillers. Dr. Dhanani is certified to treat patients using Invisalign and Cerec 3-D CAD/CAM technology, as well as sleep apnea.



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Vascular and Thoracic Surgery at UF Health: SPECIALIZED CARE FOR COMPLEX CONDITIONS

By Adrian Finol, MD - Medical Director of Lung Health and Cancer Center

When it comes to treating diseases of the chest and vascular system, patients deserve access to the most advanced surgical expertise available. UF Health offers comprehensive vascular and thoracic surgery programs that bring together highly trained surgeons, leading-edge technology and a multidisciplinary approach to deliver exceptional outcomes for patients facing some of the most complex medical conditions.

Thoracic surgery at UF Health encompasses the specialized treatment of diseases affecting the chest, including conditions of the lungs, esophagus and heart. From early-stage lung cancer to advanced esophageal disorders, the thoracic surgery team is equipped to handle a wide spectrum of diagnoses. Surgeons at UF Health are experienced in performing minimally invasive procedures such as video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery and robotic-assisted thoracic surgery, which offer patients smaller incisions, reduced pain and faster recovery times compared with traditional open surgery. These techniques are used to treat lung nodules, pleural diseases, mediastinal tumors and other thoracic conditions with precision and care.

Lung cancer remains one of the most common and serious conditions treated by the thoracic surgery division. UF Health's approach integrates screening, diagnosis and treatment into a seamless care pathway, ensuring patients receive timely intervention. Surgeons work closely with pulmonologists, oncologists, radiation therapists and pathologists to develop individualized treatment plans. Whether a patient requires a lobectomy, segmentectomy or pneumonectomy, the surgical team leverages the latest evidence-based practices to optimize outcomes.

Esophageal conditions, including gastroesophageal reflux disease, Barrett's esophagus and esophageal cancer, also fall under the scope of thoracic surgery at UF Health. Complex esophageal surgeries such as esophagectomy demand a high level of surgical skill, and UF Health's surgeons bring years of specialized training and experience to every case. Patients benefit from a coordinated care model that addresses both the surgical and long-term management needs of these conditions.



On the vascular side, UF Health provides expert care for diseases affecting the body's network of arteries and veins. Vascular surgery covers a broad range of conditions, including peripheral artery disease, aortic aneurysms, carotid artery disease, deep vein thrombosis and varicose veins. These conditions can significantly impact a patient's quality of life and, in some cases, pose life-threatening risks if left untreated.

UF Health's vascular surgeons are skilled in both open surgical techniques and endovascular procedures, which use catheters and imaging guidance to treat vascular problems from within the blood vessels. Endovascular approaches such as angioplasty, stenting and endovascular aneurysm repair, or EVAR, represent significant advances in vascular care, allowing many patients to avoid the risks and lengthy recovery associated with traditional surgery. Aortic disease is an area of particular focus for the vascular surgery team. Whether treating abdominal aortic aneurysms or thoracic aortic conditions, UF Health surgeons employ state-of-the-art imaging and surgical techniques to provide safe and effective treatment. The program also addresses critical limb ischemia, a severe form of peripheral artery disease that can lead to amputation if not managed promptly, through limb salvage procedures designed to restore blood flow and preserve mobility.

What sets UF Health apart is its commitment to a patient-centered, multidisciplinary model of care. Vascular and thoracic surgeons collaborate with specialists across cardiology, radiology, anesthesiology and critical care to ensure comprehensive treatment planning. Additionally, as an academic health center, UF Health is actively involved in clinical research and surgical innovation, giving patients access to emerging therapies and clinical trials that may not be available elsewhere.

For patients navigating complex vascular and thoracic conditions, UF Health stands as a trusted destination for specialized surgical care, combining clinical excellence with compassion at every step of the treatment journey.

About Adrian Finol, MD



Adrian Finol, MD, is dedicated to delivering comprehensive, patient-centered care grounded in trust, education and shared decision-making. He takes time to understand each patient and clearly explain what to expect before, during and after surgery so they feel informed, supported and confident in their care. Dr. Finol serves as Medical Director of the Lung Health and Cancer Center and President of the UF Cancer Program. He has a strong professional focus on lung cancer, particularly early diagnosis and improving outcomes, and has collaborated with national leaders including the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer and the American Cancer Society to advance cancer care. Guided by a commitment to educate and heal, he supports patients with compassion and clarity through every stage of their journey.

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For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit UFHealth.org/Central-Florida-Care or call 352-323-5665.

7 EYE CARE MYTHS DEBUNKED

Practicing proper eye care is critical to maintaining your eye health. However, there are many misleading myths about vision loss that can lead to uninformed and unhealthy practices. Here are seven debunked eye care myths to help you determine fact from fiction while maintaining your eyesight.

MOST POPULAR EYE CARE MYTHS

1. Vision loss is unpreventable: While it's true that many serious eye conditions don't always show symptoms, nearly 80% of vision loss can be prevented with early detection and treatment. A routine eye exam as part of your yearly visit to an optometrist can identify growing problems, such as glaucoma, before they become serious enough to start causing vision loss. If you experience a sudden change in vision, including blurriness, floaters, pain, or difficulty focusing, your optometrist will be able to diagnose those symptoms as well.

2. Having 20/20 vision means your eyes are healthy: Twenty-twenty vision indicates your central vision is clear, but that doesn't mean your eyes have a clean bill of health. Conditions such as retinal disease and problems with your cornea can still persist, even with 20/20 eyesight. People with such "perfect" vision can still experience issues with visual tracking and other skills, making it difficult to work or learn. That's why a comprehensive eye exam looks at more than just your eye strength, so any issues can be detected and corrected.

3. Wearing eyeglasses and contacts weakens your vision: It's a common misconception that using contacts or glasses, or using a prescription that's too strong, will permanently worsen your eyesight. The truth is your brain wants to see as clearly as possible, and wearing glasses and contacts can greatly improve your eyesight, reducing eye strain and headaches. Because your brain has become accustomed to seeing things less clearly, it's likely new prescription lenses may seem overwhelmingly vibrant and may take a period of adjustment. While an incorrect eyeglass or contacts prescription can cause short-term effects like eyestrain or headaches, it won't permanently damage your vision. Instead, work with your optometrist to find the correct prescription for your eyes.

4. Eye exercises can eliminate the need for glasses or contacts: Eye muscle exercises, also known as visual therapy, can help certain eye muscle disorders that affect visual skills like convergence and



divergence. However, the need for eyeglasses or contacts depends on much more than the strength of your eye's muscles. Natural factors like your cornea's shape or eye length, as well as the development of cataracts or other eye diseases, will affect whether you need a visual prescription — all of which are factors that can't be fixed with visual therapy.

5. Sitting too close to a TV or computer damages your eyes: Some people think that excessive screen time or sitting too close to electronic devices is a cause of nearsightedness. In fact, it's often a symptom of it. While it's not a good idea to stare closely at bright screens, you may find it necessary if your devices are appearing blurry. Instead, take it as a sign to go and get your eyes checked.

6. Cataracts grow back: Cataracts happen when the naturally clear lens inside your eye begins to cloud, which can occur as you age. If the clouding is serious enough, the lens may need to be surgically removed and replaced with an artificial lens. Once the natural lens is completely removed and replaced, cataracts cannot grow back. What you may experience instead is a "secondary cataract," where cells collect on the posterior capsule, a tissue film that holds the lens implant in place. This can usually be corrected through an in-office laser procedure.

7. You don't need a regular eye exam if you see well: People often assume that if their vision is fine, they can skip their yearly trip to the optometrist. In actuality, much more happens during an annual vision checkup than just updating your prescription. Part of your eye exam checks for any changes in your eye health that can be possible symptoms of

other serious health conditions, including allergies, high blood pressure, diabetes, or even brain tumors and cancers. Your eye exam can help detect potentially life-threatening diseases that not only affect your health but take a toll on your whole body. Regular eye exams will help you catch and treat these conditions early on, preventing vision loss and protecting your health.

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Annual comprehensive eye exams are an important part of maintaining your overall health. No matter your eye health needs, the experts at Lake Eye, a US Eye company, have what you need to keep your vision strong. From comprehensive eye exams and a full-service optical department to advance surgical treatments for nearly every condition, Lake Eye is dedicated to preserving and restoring your vision.

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Seeing and Hearing: The Dynamic Duo of Your Senses

March is Save Your Vision Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of eye health. While most people recognize how crucial vision is to daily life, fewer realize how closely our ability to see and hear are connected. As a Doctor of Audiology, I often remind patients that their ears and eyes work as a team to help them navigate the world, maintain balance, and communicate effectively.

If one sense begins to decline, the other has to compensate. When people experience hearing loss, they unknowingly start relying more on their vision—watching lip movements, facial expressions, and body language to fill in the gaps. Similarly, those with vision impairment lean on their hearing to identify their surroundings. But what happens when both begin to fade?

The Eyes and Ears: A Perfect Team

Your brain is constantly integrating information from both hearing and vision, making sense of your environment in real-time. Think about the last time you had a conversation in a noisy restaurant—your ears were processing speech while your eyes helped you focus on the speaker's lips and expressions to piece together the words.

This connection is so strong that research shows vision can even alter what we hear. The McGurk Effect, for example, is a fascinating auditory illusion where your brain changes what you hear based on what your eyes see. If a person says "ba" but their lips form the shape of "fa," you might hear "fa" instead of "ba" (McGurk & MacDonald, 1976).

But when either hearing or vision is impaired, this natural teamwork is disrupted—making everyday activities like conversation, walking, and driving more challenging.

The Brain's Role: Why Dual Sensory Loss Matters
Hearing and vision aren't just passive senses; they're deeply linked to cognition and brain function. When one declines, the brain has to work harder to compensate, leading to:

- **Cognitive Overload** – Straining to hear or see pulls mental energy away from memory and focus.
- **Increased Fall Risk** – The inner ear plays a crucial role in balance, and vision is essential for spatial awareness. Older adults with hearing and vision loss are at a significantly higher risk of falls (Lin et al., 2012).

- **Greater Dementia Risk** – Studies show that untreated hearing loss is linked to an increased risk of cognitive decline and dementia, and when combined with vision impairment, the impact on brain health is even greater (Gurgel et al., 2014).

The takeaway? Hearing and vision should never be treated in isolation. They work together, and when one is neglected, it puts more strain on the other.

Why People Prioritize Vision Over Hearing

When vision changes, most people rush to the eye doctor to get glasses or contacts. But when hearing starts to fade, many ignore the signs—even though hearing loss is just as impactful on quality of life.

Some common reasons people delay hearing care include:

- **They assume hearing loss is normal with age.** (So is vision loss, but that doesn't stop anyone from getting glasses!)
- **They don't realize how much they're missing.** Hearing loss happens gradually, so people adapt without noticing the slow decline.
- **They think hearing aids won't help.** Today's hearing technology is more advanced and discreet than ever, dramatically improving communication and cognitive health.

How to Protect Both Your Vision and Hearing

Since your eyes and ears work together, maintaining both is crucial for overall well-being. Here's how you can protect these vital senses:

- 1. Schedule Regular Eye Exams** – Vision changes can be gradual, so regular checkups ensure early detection of conditions like cataracts or macular degeneration.
- 2. Get Your Hearing Checked** – A simple baseline hearing test can help identify early signs of hearing loss before it impacts your daily life.
- 3. Protect Your Ears from Noise** – Long-term exposure to loud sounds is a leading cause of hearing loss. Wear hearing protection in noisy environments and keep headphone volumes at safe levels.
- 4. Exercise Regularly** – Physical activity supports healthy circulation, which benefits both your eyes and ears.

S. Limit Screen Time – Digital eye strain is real! Follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds to reduce eye fatigue.

The Bottom Line: Prioritize Your Hearing Health

This Save Your Vision Month, let's take a more comprehensive approach to wellness. Seeing clearly is essential—but so is hearing clearly. Vision and hearing work together, and when we neglect one, we may be unknowingly putting extra strain on our brain and body.

At AudioNova, we believe that hearing health is a crucial part of overall well-being. That's why we offer complimentary hearing evaluations to help you stay proactive about your health.

If you've noticed any changes in your hearing—or even if you haven't—it's time to establish a baseline. Call us today to schedule your free hearing test and keep your brain, balance, and communication at their best!

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WHY CHOOSE STEM CELL THERAPY?

By Trevor Ferguson, DC

Of the available Non-Surgical Pain Relief Therapy procedures, stem cell therapy is the best-known and most effective. Stem cells exist throughout your body and help to heal damaged tissue. As you age, your stem cell count becomes depleted, which makes it harder for your body to heal. Fortunately, medical advancements have created a safe procedure in which stem cells can be harvested and then used for better healing. Here's a look at five reasons to choose stem cell therapy.

Avoid Surgical Procedures

Even minor surgeries carry risks. Stem cell therapy, however, is a minimally-invasive treatment in which you'll avoid going under the knife. While there are certainly scenarios where surgery is the best option, if your ailment can be otherwise treated, then it's worth exploring treatments that don't carry the risk of surgical complications.

Avoid Pharmaceuticals

Instead of using prescription drugs to mask your symptoms, you can use stem cell therapy to solve the ailment at its source. This will also allow you to avoid any medication side effects, as well as any risk of addiction.

No Need for Anesthesia

Many folks feel great fear about being put under, or simply don't like the associated drowsiness. With stem cell therapy, anesthesia won't be necessary.

Heals Wounds & Incisions

Medical research has shown how stem cell therapy boosts the growth of new skin tissue and replaces scar tissue with newly-grown tissue.

Sports-Related Injuries

Stem cell therapy has become a strong treatment option for common orthopedic injuries that are suffered by athletes.

Get To Know Dr. Ferguson

Founder of The Stem Cell Pro Clinic

My Path: Arizona, Brazil, and Beyond

After graduating from Mountain View High School in Mesa, I spent two years serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Brazil. That experience deepened my purpose—to serve others and lead with compassion.



When I returned home, I married my high school sweetheart, Sheree, and moved to Dallas, Texas, to attend chiropractic school at Parker University. Today, Sheree and I are raising four amazing boys here in Arizona—and I'm still passionate about helping people feel better, move better, and live better.

Hi, I'm Dr. Trevor Ferguson. My journey into chiropractic and regenerative medicine began when I was just 10 years old. I told my parents I wanted to become a chiropractor—something most kids probably don't say.

What inspired me? Watching my dad's best friend, a local chiropractor, help people of all ages overcome pain and live healthier lives. His office felt different from a traditional medical practice. There was energy, hope, and healing. Even patients in pain walked out smiling. I knew then: I wanted to help people heal, naturally.

The Turning Point That Changed Everything

After years of practicing chiropractic care, I began noticing that some patients needed more than traditional treatments to truly recover.

Then came a personal turning point: my dad—an active, athletic man—was facing double knee replacement surgery. I asked him to give me three months to try something different: stem cell therapy.

He agreed.

And after just one treatment, his pain disappeared—and he never needed the surgery.

That single experience opened my eyes to the power of regenerative medicine. I had seen good results in the past—but never anything that fast or effective.

Why I Chose Stem Cells Over Everything Else

After seeing what stem cells did for my father, I began offering regenerative medicine to my patients. The results were consistent—and remarkable.

Patients who had tried every other option were finally experiencing real relief. Often, a single stem cell treatment worked better than a year of supplements, labs, and dietary programs.

It was more effective, more affordable, and more convenient.

That's when I made the leap: I phased out functional medicine and built a new practice focused entirely on regenerative care.

But here's what sets us apart:

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- **Personalized care:** Every patient is unique, and so is their care plan.
- **Real results, not theory:** Our focus is on outcomes, not hype.

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We don't believe in confusing packages, upsells, or hidden fees. Our pricing is clear and transparent, and we'll never pressure you into care that doesn't feel right.

If you're searching for a safer, science-based way to heal—not just manage symptoms—we're here to guide you.

If you're interested in stem cell therapy, be sure to get in touch with a reputable specialist. For stem cell therapy in The Villages, FL, contact the experts at Stem Cell Pro at 352-689-9540.



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TIGHT SKIN ON YOUR LEGS?

UNDERSTANDING CIRCULATION AND VEIN PROBLEMS

Imagine this scenario: you're going about your day when you suddenly notice a tight, uncomfortable feeling in the skin on your legs. It's not pain, but rather a sensation that your skin is stretched and constricted. What could be causing this unsettling tightness? In many cases, this symptom may be linked to circulation and vein problems. In this article, we'll explore the reasons behind that peculiar sensation and delve into the world of circulatory issues that can affect your legs.

Understanding the Circulatory System

Before we dive into circulation and vein problems, let's take a moment to understand how the circulatory system works. The circulatory system, comprised of the heart, blood vessels, and blood, is responsible for delivering oxygen and nutrients to cells throughout the body. Veins carry deoxygenated blood back to the heart, while arteries transport oxygenated blood away from the heart.

When the circulatory system functions correctly, blood flows smoothly through veins and arteries, maintaining a delicate balance. However, when issues arise, blood circulation can be compromised, leading to various symptoms, including tightness in the skin on the legs.

Vein Problems: A Common Culprit

Vein problems are among the leading causes of skin tightness in the legs. The most prevalent condition associated with this sensation is chronic venous insufficiency (CVI). CVI occurs when the valves in the veins of the legs weaken or become damaged, preventing efficient blood flow back to the heart. As a result, blood pools in the leg veins, increasing pressure and causing a range of symptoms.

Common symptoms of CVI include:

- **Skin Tightness:** A common early symptom, individuals with CVI often describe their legs as feeling tight, heavy, or swollen.
- **Varicose Veins:** Visible, bulging veins near the surface of the skin are a hallmark of CVI.
- **Leg Pain:** Some people with CVI experience aching or discomfort in the legs, especially after prolonged periods of sitting or standing.
- **Itching and Burning:** Skin irritation, itching, and a burning sensation may accompany CVI.
- **Skin Changes:** Over time, CVI can lead to skin changes such as discoloration, ulcers, and thickening.

Reduced Blood Flow: An Underlying Issue

Another potential reason for tight skin on the legs is reduced blood flow, a condition known as peripheral artery disease (PAD). PAD occurs when the arteries that supply blood to the legs become narrowed or blocked by atherosclerosis, a buildup of fatty deposits.

The reduced blood flow in PAD can lead to symptoms like:

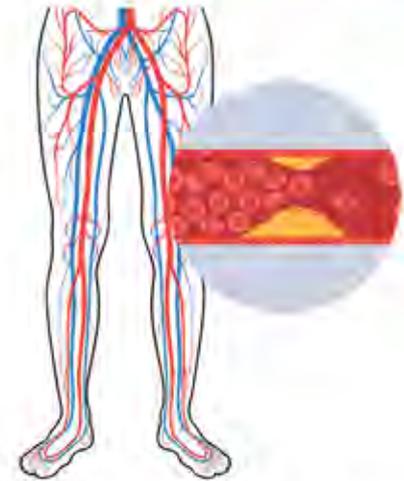
- **Skin Tightness:** Reduced blood flow can cause a sensation of tightness, particularly during physical activity.
- **Intermittent Claudication:** This term refers to pain, cramping, or discomfort in the legs during exercise, which subsides with rest.
- **Cold Feet:** Poor circulation can make your feet feel cold, especially compared to the rest of your body.
- **Numbness or Weakness:** Some individuals with PAD may experience numbness or weakness in their legs.
- **Gangrene:** In severe cases, untreated PAD can lead to tissue damage and even gangrene, a condition where tissue dies due to a lack of blood flow.

Risk Factors and Prevention

Several risk factors can contribute to circulatory and vein problems in the legs. These include:

- **Age:** As we age, the risk of developing circulatory issues increases.
- **Smoking:** Smoking is a significant risk factor for both PAD and CVI.
- **Obesity:** Carrying excess weight puts additional pressure on the veins and arteries.
- **Family History:** A family history of circulatory problems can increase your risk.
- **Inactivity:** A sedentary lifestyle can contribute to poor circulation.
- **Diabetes:** Individuals with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing circulatory issues.
- **High Blood Pressure:** Hypertension can strain blood vessels and increase the risk of circulatory problems.

Prevention and management of these issues often involve lifestyle changes, including quitting smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, regular exercise, and managing underlying conditions like diabetes and hypertension. If symptoms persist or worsen, seeking medical evaluation is essential for proper diagnosis and treatment.



Conclusion

The sensation of tight skin on your legs can be unsettling, but understanding the underlying causes can lead to effective treatment and improved quality of life. Circulation and vein problems, such as chronic venous insufficiency and peripheral artery disease, are common culprits behind this discomfort. Recognizing the symptoms and risk factors associated with these conditions is the first step toward proactive prevention and early intervention.

If you or someone you know experiences persistent skin tightness or related symptoms in the legs, consult a healthcare professional for a thorough evaluation and personalized treatment plan. By taking steps to address circulatory and vein problems, you can regain comfort and mobility, allowing you to enjoy life to the fullest.

Get support for your veins and circulation problems today

You may find that you need medical treatment for your veins and the Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center wants to help. Contact us today to learn more about our services and how we can help you live better.

For more information regarding the causes of tight feeling skin on your legs, visit <https://cfvein.com/causes-of-tight-feeling-skin-on-my-legs/>

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ARE YOUR SYMPTOMS RELATED TO ATRIAL FIBRILLATION (AFIB)?

T.E. Vallabhan, MD, FACC



A Fib is an irregular heart rate that is often rapid with palpitations and causes insufficient blood flow. More than 6 million individuals in the United States have AFib. Hereditary heart disease usually causes the disorder, but other factors contributing to heart arrhythmias are high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, heavy alcohol use, and more. A disruption to the top chamber of the heart, prompting the heart's rhythm and rate to fluctuate, causes an arrhythmia.

The two sides of the heart work in opposition to each other. The right side of the heart takes in deoxygenated blood from the body and feeds them to the veins and lungs; the left side carries the oxygen and nutrient-rich blood from the lungs and feeds it back to the body. Four chambers make up the heart. The top chambers are called the atria, and the lower are the ventricles. Without proper functioning, the heart will begin to cause damage to major organs, and without maintenance, your heart can cause adverse effects very quickly.

Most of us are very familiar with symptoms of coronary heart disease, but AFib symptoms often go overlooked and are not taken as seriously as they should be. Atrial Fibrillation takes over 130,000 lives each year.

The symptoms of an atrial heart arrhythmia are:

- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Racing heart
- Fluttering heart
- Palpitation
- Uneven heartbeat
- Chest pain

If left untreated, AFib can cause blood clots to form in the heart. These clots are produced due to the restricted pumping of the chambers, which causes the blood to pool in the atria and form clots. If the blood clots break off, they can reach the brain and cause a stroke. Patients with AFIB are seven times more likely to have a stroke than those with normal heart rhythm.

Treatment for AFib

- Medications to regulate the heart's rhythm (antiarrhythmic drugs)
- Blood-thinners to reduce the risk of stroke
- Surgery (i.e. Catheter ablation, MAZE procedure)

It's critical to seek medical attention from a respected cardiologist if you are experiencing any of the symptoms related to atrial fibrillation. Do not wait, the heart muscle, rhythm, rate, and ability to pump correctly, is what is keeping you alive.

Dr. V

T.E. VALLABHAN, MD, FACC
BOARD CERTIFIED CARDIOLOGIST
SPECIALIST IN DISEASES OF THE HEART, ARTERIES AND VEINS

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Getting Back to Being Your Best:

Foot and Ankle Orthopaedics with Dr. Cedric Tankson at UF Health

By Cedric Tankson, MD - Orthopaedic Surgeon

Whether you are an avid runner training for your next marathon, a passionate gardener who spends weekends tending to flower beds, or a grandparent who loves tossing a football in the backyard, an active lifestyle is one of life's greatest rewards. But when foot and ankle pain enters the picture, even the simplest activities can feel out of reach. At UF Health Orthopaedics, Dr. Cedric Tankson is helping patients throughout Lake County reclaim their mobility and get back to doing what they love.

A Specialist You Can Trust

Dr. Cedric Tankson is a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon who specializes in foot and ankle care. He earned his medical degree from the University of South Florida College of Medicine in Tampa and completed his orthopaedic residency training at Louisiana State University in New Orleans. To further sharpen his expertise, Dr. Tankson pursued a prestigious foot and ankle fellowship at The Institute for Foot and Ankle Reconstruction at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland.

A familiar name in Lake County, Dr. Tankson has been serving the community since 2005 and joined the UF Health Orthopaedics team in January 2020. His deep roots in the area and his commitment to delivering a high standard of care have made him a trusted provider for patients of all ages and activity levels.

"I look forward to helping people whose lives have been interrupted by pain," Dr. Tankson has said. "I want them to get back to the activities they enjoy."

Comprehensive Foot and Ankle Care

Foot and ankle conditions affect millions of people each year. From weekend warriors pushing through a pickup basketball game to retirees navigating uneven terrain on a nature trail, injuries and chronic conditions can strike at any stage of life. Dr. Tankson's clinical expertise covers a wide range of these conditions. His areas of interest include arthritis management, fracture care, joint restoration, sporting injuries, and tendinitis. Whether a patient is dealing with a sudden sports injury, chronic pain from arthritis, or long-term wear and tear on the joints, Dr. Tankson brings the skills and experience needed to develop a personalized treatment plan.



What sets Dr. Tankson apart is his ability to treat the full spectrum of foot and ankle problems, from conservative approaches to complex surgical solutions. As a foot and ankle specialist, he performs reconstructive surgery for patients with more involved conditions, including adult acquired flatfoot and other deformities that can significantly impact quality of life. His published research contributions further reflect his dedication to advancing the field, with studies covering topics such as orthopaedic foot and ankle implant detection, surgical approaches to joint fusion procedures, and pediatric bone infections.

The UF Health Advantage

Being part of the UF Health system means Dr. Tankson's patients benefit from access to world-class resources and a multidisciplinary team of specialists. UF Health Orthopaedics offers surgical joint repairs and replacements, post-operative care, and inpatient rehabilitation services — all conveniently located close to home. This continuum of care ensures that patients receive consistent, coordinated treatment from initial evaluation through recovery.

Dr. Tankson practices at UF Health Medical Group Orthopaedics in Leesburg and at UF Health locations in The Villages, giving patients across Central Florida convenient access to expert care without traveling to a major metropolitan center.

"It's an honor for me to be part of the UF Health team," Dr. Tankson has expressed. "UF Health's reputation speaks for itself."

Take the First Step

Foot and ankle problems do not have to sideline you from the life you want to live. Whether your pain is slowing you down on morning walks, keeping you off the tennis court, or making everyday tasks uncomfortable, specialized care can make a meaningful difference. With Dr. Cedric Tankson and the team at UF Health Orthopaedics, you have a partner dedicated to helping you move forward — pain-free and confident.

To learn more or schedule an appointment, contact UF Health Orthopaedics today.

About Cedric Tankson, MD



Cedric J. Tankson, M.D., earned his medical degree from The University of South Florida College of Medicine in Tampa, Florida. He completed his orthopaedic residency training at Louisiana State University in New Orleans and completed a foot and ankle fellowship at The Institute for Foot and Ankle Reconstruction at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland.

Dr. Tankson joined the UF Health-Villages orthopaedics staff in January 2020 and is board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. His clinical area of interests include arthritis, fracture management, joint restoration, sporting injuries and tendinitis.

Dr. Tankson has been published in several publications and has experience researching many topics including foot and ankle disorders, pediatric acute hematogenous osteomyelitis, cubital tunnel syndrome and infectious diseases.

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THE NEW LUXURY ESSENTIAL: Sleeping Better Than Ever

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDSM

In the evolving world of health and wellness, true indulgence is no longer defined by what we add to our days—but by how deeply we rest at night. Sleep, once treated as a biological necessity, has become the ultimate marker of a well-lived life. And at the center of this quiet revolution is an unexpected accessory: the custom dental sleep device.

For many, sleep apnea has long carried a clinical stigma—white labs, blinking monitors, and bulky equipment that feels more hospital-grade than home sanctuary. But today's approach reframes the conversation entirely. Modern dental sleep devices are discreet, elegant, and designed with comfort in mind, aligning seamlessly with a lifestyle that values refinement, restoration, and ease.

Sleep as the Highest Form of Self-Care

Luxury wellness isn't about extremes. It's about optimization—making subtle, intelligent choices that elevate everyday experiences. A dental sleep device does exactly that by working quietly in the background, allowing the body to breathe freely and rest uninterrupted.

Unlike traditional sleep equipment that can dominate a bedroom or disrupt intimacy, these devices are custom-crafted to fit the wearer precisely. There are no hoses, no noise, no visual clutter. Just a small, tailored appliance that supports natural airflow and promotes deeper, more restorative sleep.

The result? Waking up clear-headed, energized, and calm—without feeling like you've "done" anything at all.

A Bespoke Experience for the Modern Sleeper

Customization is the hallmark of luxury, and dental sleep devices are nothing if not bespoke. Each is designed from a simple detailed scan of the patient's bite, ensuring a fit that feels intuitive rather than intrusive.

This personalization transforms the experience from treatment to ritual. Putting the device in at night becomes as effortless as slipping on silk pajamas or dimming the lights. It's a quiet signal to the body: rest is coming.



For those who travel frequently, the appeal is even greater. Lightweight and portable, these devices slip easily into a carry-on—no special adapters, no explanations at airport security, no disruption to routine. Whether at home, in a boutique hotel, or halfway across the globe, restorative sleep travels with you.

The Aesthetic of Effortless Health

There is a growing shift in wellness culture away from performative health and toward understated optimization. The most coveted tools are the ones no one notices—but everyone feels.

Dental sleep devices fit seamlessly into this ethos. There's no outward sign, no nighttime spectacle. Partners sleep undisturbed. Bedrooms remain serene. The benefits unfold privately: fewer nighttime awakenings, smoother breathing, and mornings that begin without fog or fatigue.

This is wellness that doesn't ask for attention. It simply delivers.

Beyond Sleep: The Ripple Effect

When sleep improves, everything else follows. Mornings feel lighter. Focus sharpens. Workouts become more effective. Even mood and skin often reflect the change.

Rather than addressing symptoms one by one—fatigue, irritability, low energy—supporting sleep addresses the foundation. A dental sleep device becomes not a solution to a problem, but an investment in overall vitality.

In this way, it aligns perfectly with the modern wellness mindset: proactive, refined, and deeply personal.

Redefining What It Means to Treat Yourself

Indulgence has evolved. Today, it's less about excess and more about intention. It's choosing experiences that enhance life quietly but profoundly.

A dental sleep device may not sparkle or announce itself, but its impact is unmistakable. Night after night, it creates space for the body to do what it was designed to do—rest, recover, and renew.

In a world that demands so much of our waking hours, the most luxurious thing we can do may be to sleep—fully, deeply, and effortlessly.

And that kind of rest? That's the ultimate upgrade.

Meet Dr. Rozensky

As a Diplomate of the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine and recognized as a qualified dentist by the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine, Dr. Rozensky earned his Doctorate of Dental Surgery degree from University of New York at Buffalo and then went on to serve our country in the United States Air Force, after which he has enjoyed private practice in General Dentistry for over 20 years. Dr. Rozensky now includes his passion for Sleep Dentistry in his practice and finds true joy in the life-changing care he is providing.

At Laurel Manor Dental and SleepCare, Dr. Richard Rozensky and the entire team work closely with you so that you may make informed decisions about your health. In addition to sleep dentistry, all aspects of general dental care and treatment including restorative, cosmetic, implant restoration, hygiene and Invisalign™ are provided.

From the moment you step in the door you will feel at ease. You will be welcomed by a warm and inviting atmosphere, combined with a professional and caring team. You will immediately recognize the emphasis on professionalism and quality, from the people who care for you to the technology used—this is the way dental care should be!

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Understanding Squamous Cell Carcinoma

EXPERT CARE AND TREATMENT

By David Kosiorek, PA-C

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is the second most common form of skin cancer, affecting millions of people worldwide each year. While this diagnosis can be concerning, early detection and proper treatment lead to excellent outcomes for most patients. At Lumen Dermatology, our experienced team specializes in comprehensive SCC care, from prevention and early detection to advanced treatment options.

What is Squamous Cell Carcinoma?

Squamous cell carcinoma develops in the squamous cells that make up the outer layer of your skin. Unlike basal cell carcinoma, SCC has a higher tendency to spread to other parts of the body if left untreated, making early intervention crucial. This cancer typically appears on sun-exposed areas such as the face, ears, neck, lips, backs of hands, arms, and legs.

The primary cause of SCC is cumulative ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure from the sun or tanning beds. Other risk factors include fair skin, a history of sunburns, weakened immune system, exposure to certain chemicals, and previous skin cancer diagnoses. People over 50, men, and those with outdoor occupations face increased risk.

Recognizing the Warning Signs

SCC can present in various forms, making professional evaluation essential. Common signs include persistent, scaly red patches that may bleed or crust over, elevated growths with a central depression, wart-like growths, and open sores that don't heal within several weeks. Any new growth, changing mole, or suspicious skin lesion warrants immediate dermatological examination.

The cancer often develops gradually, which can lead patients to dismiss early symptoms as minor skin irritations. However, what distinguishes SCC from benign conditions is its persistence and progressive nature. Unlike temporary skin issues that resolve on their own, SCC lesions continue growing and changing over time.

When SCC is suspected, we perform precise biopsies to confirm the diagnosis and determine the specific subtype and characteristics of the cancer.



Our treatment philosophy centers on achieving complete cancer removal while preserving both function and cosmetic appearance.

For patients who aren't surgical candidates or have specific location concerns, we provide alternative treatments such as superficial radiation therapy. Our team carefully evaluates each case to recommend the most appropriate treatment approach based on the cancer's size, location, depth, and the patient's overall health status.

Prevention and Ongoing Care

Beyond treatment, Lumen Dermatology emphasizes prevention and long-term skin health management. We provide comprehensive skin cancer screenings, educate patients about proper sun protection, and establish personalized follow-up schedules. Our team recommends daily broad-spectrum sunscreen use, protective clothing, and avoiding peak sun hours. For patients with a history of SCC, regular monitoring becomes essential since they face increased risk for developing additional skin cancers.

Your Partner in Skin Health

Receiving an SCC diagnosis doesn't have to be overwhelming. At Lumen Dermatology, our compassionate team guides you through every step of your treatment journey, from initial consultation through recovery and beyond. We're committed to providing personalized, evidence-based care that prioritizes your health, comfort, and peace of mind.

Expert Dermatology Care for Your Skin

At Lumen Dermatology, we bring over 70 years combined experience in skin health. Our team specializes in diagnosing, treating, and preventing skin conditions, including acne, eczema, psoriasis, and skin cancer. With a patient-centered approach, we provide personalized care to help you achieve and maintain healthy skin for life.

Book Your Appointment

Booking a Dermatology appointment is an essential step for anyone looking to address skin concerns or maintain overall skin health. By scheduling an appointment, patients gain access to professional insights and tailored solutions that can significantly improve their skin health.

Call 352-830-1500 to schedule your appointment today!


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Introducing Lumen Dermatology

We're excited to share that David Kosiorek, PA-C and Michael J. Freeman, MD have started a NEW Dermatology practice! David has 27 years of Dermatology experience and is proudly serving The Villages and Ocala. He is passionate in providing meticulous, personalized care with a focus on early detection and treatment of skin cancer. His new practice, Lumen Dermatology, continues his commitment to excellence, offering comprehensive skin care solutions in a welcoming environment.

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Lake Sumter Urology is proud to offer cutting-edge shockwave therapy, a revolutionary non-invasive treatment that's transforming how patients address multiple health concerns. This innovative technology harnesses the power of acoustic waves to stimulate the body's natural healing processes, providing effective relief for conditions ranging from erectile dysfunction to chronic pain in joints and soft tissues.

Understanding Shockwave Therapy

Shockwave therapy, also known as extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT), delivers targeted acoustic waves to affected areas of the body. These high-energy sound waves penetrate deep into tissues, triggering increased blood flow, breaking down scar tissue, and stimulating cellular regeneration. The treatment is performed in-office, requires no anesthesia, and allows patients to return to their daily activities immediately afterward.

Treating Erectile Dysfunction

For men struggling with erectile dysfunction, shockwave therapy offers a promising alternative to medications or invasive procedures. The treatment works by promoting the growth of new blood vessels in penile tissue, enhancing blood flow and improving erectile function naturally. Multiple clinical studies have demonstrated significant improvements in sexual performance and satisfaction following a course of shockwave treatments. This non-pharmaceutical approach is particularly beneficial for men who cannot take oral ED medications due to health conditions or those seeking a more permanent solution.

Relief for Golfer's Elbow

Golfer's elbow, medically known as medial epicondylitis, causes pain and inflammation on the inner side of the elbow where forearm tendons attach to the bone. This condition doesn't just affect golfers—it can develop in anyone who performs repetitive wrist and arm motions. Shockwave therapy targets the damaged tendons, accelerating healing and reducing inflammation. Patients typically experience decreased pain and improved range of motion, allowing them to return to their favorite activities without the prolonged recovery times associated with traditional treatments.

Addressing Knee Pain

Chronic knee pain can significantly impact quality of life, making simple activities like walking or climbing stairs challenging. Whether caused by osteoarthritis,



tendinitis, or previous injuries, knee pain responds well to shockwave therapy. The treatment stimulates the regeneration of damaged cartilage and reduces inflammation in the joint. By promoting natural healing mechanisms, shockwave therapy can delay or even eliminate the need for more invasive interventions like cortisone injections or surgery.

Healing Heel Pain

Plantar fasciitis and other causes of heel pain affect millions of people, making each step uncomfortable. Traditional treatments often involve rest, orthotics, and anti-inflammatory medications with varying degrees of success. Shockwave therapy offers a more direct approach by targeting the inflamed plantar fascia or Achilles tendon. The acoustic waves break up calcified deposits, reduce inflammation, and stimulate tissue repair. Many patients report significant pain reduction after just a few sessions, with improvements continuing for months after treatment completion.

The Treatment Experience

At Lake Sumter Urology, the shockwave therapy process is straightforward and convenient. Each session typically lasts 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the condition being treated. Most treatment protocols involve multiple sessions scheduled over several weeks to achieve optimal results. Patients may experience mild discomfort during the procedure, but this is generally well-tolerated without anesthesia. Side effects are minimal and may include temporary redness, swelling, or soreness at the treatment site.

Why Choose Lake Sumter Urology

Lake Sumter Urology combines advanced medical technology with compassionate, personalized care. The experienced medical team thoroughly evaluates each patient to determine if shockwave therapy is the right treatment option for their specific condition. With a commitment to patient education and evidence-based medicine, Lake Sumter Urology ensures that every individual receives the most appropriate and effective care available.

If you're struggling with erectile dysfunction, chronic joint pain, or other conditions that haven't responded to conventional treatments, shockwave therapy at Lake Sumter Urology may provide the relief you've been seeking. Contact the practice today to schedule a consultation and discover how this innovative treatment can help you reclaim your health and vitality.

At Lake Sumter Urology, we believe that proactive care and open communication form the foundation of excellent urologic health. Our board-certified physicians, including specialists with over ten years of robotic surgery experience, combine expertise with compassion to deliver personalized treatment plans. We participate in more than fifty managed care plans, including major Florida healthcare networks and Medicare, ensuring that advanced urologic care remains accessible to our community.

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Whether you are experiencing symptoms of an enlarged prostate, are due for a routine screening, or have received an abnormal PSA result, our team is ready to help. Contact Lake Sumter Urology today at 352-775-6899 to schedule an appointment and take the first step toward protecting your prostate health.



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REVOLUTIONIZING WELLNESS: INFINITY MEDICAL INSTITUTE'S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ANTI-AGING AND LONGEVITY

In the heart of The Villages, Florida, a beacon of medical innovation is transforming how we approach aging and personal health. Infinity Medical Institute has been at the forefront of regenerative medicine since its establishment in 2009, offering a holistic and personalized approach to wellness that goes far beyond traditional medical treatments.

Founded in Tampa and now bringing its cutting-edge services to The Villages, Infinity Medical Institute represents a paradigm shift in healthcare. The institute's philosophy is simple yet profound: it's not just about adding years to life, but adding life to years. This approach recognizes that aging is not something to be feared, but a process that can be optimized and embraced with the right medical support.

A Comprehensive Suite of Innovative Treatments

What sets Infinity Medical Institute apart is its comprehensive range of advanced therapies designed to address the multifaceted challenges of aging. The clinic offers a diverse array of treatments that target various aspects of health and wellness:

- **Bioidentical Hormone Therapy:** provides a natural approach to hormone balance, addressing common age-related symptoms like fatigue, mood fluctuations, and decreased libido.
- **Testosterone Replacement Therapy:** helps men restore vitality by supporting healthy testosterone levels, enhancing energy, muscle mass, and overall well-being.
- **Sexual Wellness Treatments:** offer targeted therapies to improve intimate health and quality of life.
- **Aesthetic Services:** Including Botox, Derma fillers, laser skin resurfacing, PRP, Body contouring, cellulite reduction.
- **Pulse Wave Therapy:** Improves circulation and activates stem cell regeneration correcting conditions like chronic pain, neuropathy and erectile dysfunction.
- **Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Therapy:** harnesses the body's own growth factors to accelerate healing and tissue repair.

- **Stem Cell Therapy:** represents a groundbreaking regenerative approach to treating injuries and revitalizing aging tissues.
- **Peptide Therapy:** uses specialized treatments to stimulate natural bodily processes, including metabolism and immune function.
- **Weight Loss Programs:** offer comprehensive, sustainable solutions supported by medical expertise.

Patient-Centered Care: Beyond Treatment

Infinity Medical Institute stands out not just for its advanced treatments, but for its commitment to patient care. The clinic offers free consultations, allowing individuals to explore their health options without financial pressure. This approach reflects their belief in transparency and patient empowerment.

Located at 322 Heald Way in The Villages, the clinic operates Monday through Thursday from 8 AM to 4 PM, and Fridays from 8 AM to 1 PM. Each patient receives a customized treatment plan that recognizes their unique health needs and personal wellness goals.

The Science of Regenerative Medicine

The institute's approach is grounded in regenerative medicine – a field that focuses on natural, integrative therapies working in harmony with the body's inherent healing processes. Their experienced medical team is dedicated to delivering evidence-based care that optimizes health and longevity.

A Vision for Transformative Healthcare

Infinity Medical Institute represents more than just a medical clinic; it's a vision of healthcare that sees aging as an opportunity for growth, renewal, and continued vitality. By combining advanced medical technologies with a compassionate, individualized approach, they are redefining what it means to age gracefully and healthily.

For those seeking to take control of their health, optimize their wellness, and embrace a more vibrant future, Infinity Medical Institute in The Villages offers a beacon of hope and innovative medical care.

About Infinity Medical Institute

Pioneers in Integrative Medicine, Infinity Medical Institute is a company dedicated to benchmarking health in concert with breakthroughs in education through



science. Understanding where individuals are in their "Life Cycle" as opposed to treating symptoms that are often an expression of a greater challenge they are experiencing with their bodies at the cellular level. A new approach in health and wellness based on recently made available research, allowing us to understand the differences in Biological Age as compared to Chronological Age.

Most of us fail to realize that our personal health is the result of the "aging process" complimented and/or penalized by the manner in which we take care of and/or misuse ourselves. Our consumption patterns combined with normal aging and physical activities directly affect our quality of life.

Our approach to wellness is based on meeting people where they are in their personal life and developing an individualized plan of action in and around nutrition, supplementation, and lifestyle.



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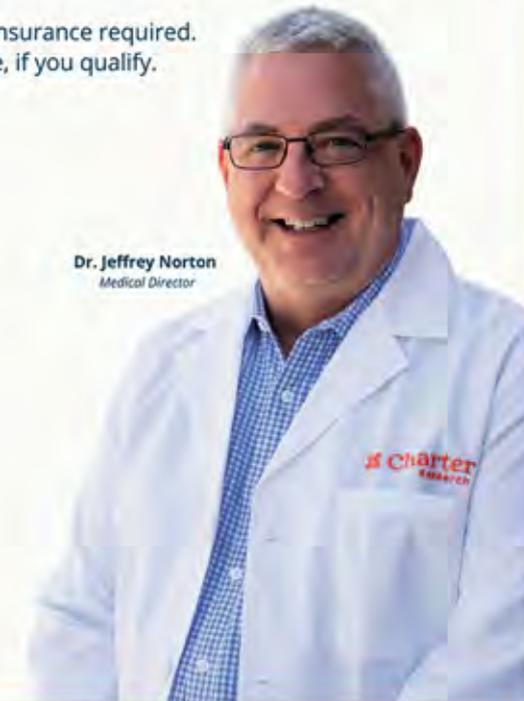
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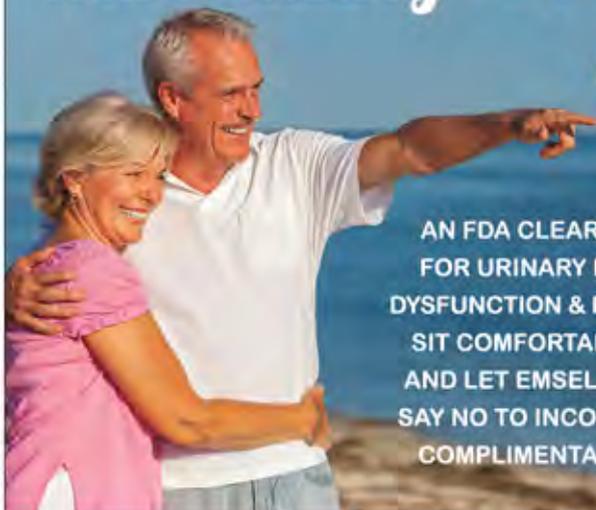
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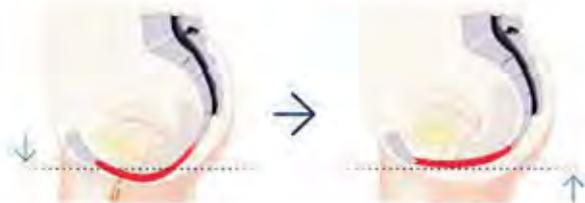
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SPRING INTO ACTION: 5 WAYS PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN TRANSFORM YOUR HEALTH

By Dr. Chad Rose, DC

As Florida's perfect weather welcomes another beautiful spring season, it's the ideal time for personal renewal. It's time to shake off the hibernation habits and spring into action for your health. Physical therapy, often underutilized and misunderstood, provides powerful tools to enhance your well-being beyond just injury recovery. Here's how making physical therapy part of your health routine can help you blossom this season.

Personalized Movement Plans for Lasting Results

One-size-fits-all exercise routines often lead to disappointment or injury. Physical therapists are movement specialists who evaluate your unique body mechanics, strengths, and limitations to create customized plans that work specifically for you.

Unlike generalized workout programs, PT-designed routines address your individual needs, whether you're recovering from surgery, managing chronic pain, or simply looking to improve your fitness safely. This personalized approach ensures you're working efficiently toward your goals while minimizing injury risk and maximizing results.

Prevention: Your Best Health Investment

Many people think of physical therapy only after injury strikes, but its preventive powers are remarkable. Regular sessions can identify and correct movement patterns that might lead to future problems. Your physical therapist can spot early warning signs in your posture, gait, or muscle imbalances that could develop into painful conditions later.

Prevention through physical therapy is particularly valuable for those with physically demanding jobs, athletes, and seniors. Like regular dental check-ups prevent major tooth problems, proactive physical therapy prevents musculoskeletal issues before they begin.

Beyond Pain Relief: Addressing Root Causes

While medications can mask pain temporarily, physical therapy works to resolve underlying issues causing discomfort. Through a combination of manual therapy, therapeutic exercises, and education, physical therapists address the root causes of pain rather than just treating symptoms.



This comprehensive approach leads to more sustainable outcomes. Many patients find that consistent PT helps them reduce dependence on pain medications while improving their quality of life. The skills learned in therapy sessions also provide tools for self-management between appointments.

Enhancing Performance in Daily Life

Physical therapy isn't just for athletes or those recovering from injuries. Everyone can benefit from improved movement quality in daily activities. From picking up your children to gardening or carrying groceries, better movement patterns make everyday tasks easier and safer.

As your body mechanics improve through therapy, you'll likely notice increased energy levels, better posture, and greater confidence in your physical abilities. These improvements ripple throughout your life, affecting everything from work productivity to leisure activities.

Holistic Approach to Wellness

Modern physical therapy takes a whole-person approach to health. Beyond exercises, therapists often address nutrition, sleep quality, stress management, and other lifestyle factors affecting physical wellness. This integrated perspective helps create sustainable health improvements rather than quick fixes.

Many therapists now incorporate mindfulness techniques, breathing exercises, and other complementary approaches that benefit both physical and mental health. This holistic strategy recognizes that true wellness encompasses both body and mind.

As spring unfolds with its promise of renewal, consider how physical therapy might help you achieve your health goals. Whether you're managing a chronic condition, recovering from injury, or simply wanting to move better and feel stronger, making physical therapy a priority can help you spring into action toward your best health yet.

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Dr. Chad Rose, DC uses chiropractic care to improve the health and wellness in all areas of patient's lives, whether they are having problems with back pain or neck pain, or just want to start feeling better when they wake up in the morning. Dr. Rose takes a "whole person" approach in chiropractic care, which means looking for the underlying causes of disease, discomfort, and pain, as opposed to just treating the symptoms. Many seemingly unrelated symptoms often arise from imbalances in the spinal column, and Dr. Rose will be able to determine the root of the pain and create a personalized chiropractic and wellness plan to suit each patient's individual needs. Under the supervision and care of our caring and skilled chiropractor, patients report higher functioning in all areas of their lives.

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Aging Doesn't Always Mean Cognitive Decline

Many people believe that cognitive decline is an inevitability as we get older — or that dementia is just a normal part of aging. But in fact, while age is perhaps the most significant risk factor for cognitive decline, this isn't the case for everyone. Many people stay sharp even into their 70s, 80s, 90s and beyond. Here are a few brain functions that may actually improve as the years roll past.

1. Older adults may make wiser split-second decisions.

Imagine driving to work in the morning, singing along to the music on the radio. The traffic light at the nearest intersection is about to turn red, and you spot a car close behind you in the rearview mirror. How fast can you read the situation and decide whether to brake and risk being rear-ended or to try to get through the intersection?

This kind of split-second decision-making relies on speedy mental processing. While rapid decision making may slow a bit beginning at age 60, we become more cautious. So, while it may take a few more milliseconds to make the split-second decision, chances are it will be a wiser choice.

2. The aging brain is better at blocking out distractions.

Imagine you're back in the car, driving with family members, loved ones, or small children. It is raining heavily, impairing visibility on the road. The other passengers in the car are trying to pass the time by playing loud games or music on their phones. How well could you spot a pedestrian running out on the road?

Older adults might be better equipped to handle this situation. A 2021 study found that older individuals were better at tuning out potential distractions and orienting their attention to essential things in their environment.

3. General knowledge, learned skills, and vocabulary accumulate with age.

Being older means having more life experience, more time to accumulate knowledge and facts, and more time to perfect hobbies and mental skills. As a result, people in their sixties and seventies gradually improve upon these abilities with age.

As a result, older adults come out on top when it comes to tests of knowledge, history, or even solving familiar math problems.



Research also shows younger generations who have grown up with the internet — like millennials and Gen Z — are more susceptible to misinformation than older adults.

Many recent studies have overturned the idea that aging causes cognitive decline across the board. While some people may experience problems with memory and other aspects of thinking or problem-solving, many other abilities stay intact. They may continue improving as we age.

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BREAKTHROUGH IN NEUROPATHY TREATMENT: HOW SUMMUS LASER THERAPY OFFERS HOPE FOR NERVE PAIN SUFFERERS

Neuropathy is a debilitating condition that affects millions of people worldwide, causing chronic pain, numbness, and significant disruption to daily life. Traditional treatments have often fallen short of providing comprehensive relief, leaving patients searching for innovative solutions. Enter the Summus Laser, a cutting-edge therapeutic approach that is revolutionizing neuropathy treatment and offering new hope to those struggling with nerve-related pain.

Understanding Neuropathy: A Complex Challenge

Neuropathy is a condition characterized by damage or dysfunction of peripheral nerves, typically causing symptoms like burning pain, tingling sensations, muscle weakness, and sensitivity to touch. Common causes include diabetes, chemotherapy, autoimmune disorders, and physical injuries. The complex nature of nerve damage has historically made treatment challenging, with many patients experiencing limited success from conventional medical interventions.

The Summus Laser: A Technological Marvel in Pain Management

The Summus Laser represents a significant advancement in medical technology, utilizing high-powered laser therapy to address nerve pain at its source. Unlike traditional treatments that merely mask symptoms, this innovative approach focuses on cellular regeneration and healing. The laser delivers concentrated light energy deep into affected tissues, stimulating natural healing processes and promoting nerve repair.

Key Mechanisms of Summus Laser Therapy

1. Cellular Stimulation: The laser's precise wavelengths penetrate damaged nerve tissues, encouraging mitochondrial activity and accelerating cellular metabolism. This process helps restore normal cellular function and reduces inflammation.

2. Improved Circulation: By enhancing blood flow to damaged nerve areas, the Summus Laser helps deliver essential nutrients and oxygen, supporting the body's natural healing mechanisms.

3. Pain Reduction: The therapy triggers the release of endorphins and reduces pain-causing inflammatory markers, providing immediate and long-term relief for patients.

Clinical Evidence and Patient Outcomes

Numerous clinical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of Summus Laser therapy in treating neuropathy. Patients report significant improvements



in pain levels, sensation restoration, and overall quality of life. Many individuals who previously struggled with chronic nerve pain have experienced remarkable recoveries, regaining mobility and reducing their dependence on pain medications.

Treatment Process and Expectations

A typical Summus Laser treatment protocol involves:

- Comprehensive initial assessment
- Customized treatment plan
- Multiple targeted laser sessions
- Gradual progression of healing and pain reduction

Most patients experience noticeable improvements within 4-6 treatment sessions, with continued benefits developing over subsequent weeks and months.

Advantages Over Traditional Neuropathy Treatments

The Summus Laser offers several distinct advantages:

- Non-invasive approach
- No significant side effects
- No pharmaceutical dependencies
- Targets root causes of nerve damage
- Supports long-term healing
- Relatively quick treatment sessions

Who Can Benefit?

Summus Laser therapy is particularly beneficial for patients with:

- Diabetic neuropathy
- Chemotherapy-induced nerve damage
- Peripheral nerve injuries
- Chronic pain conditions
- Reduced sensation in extremities

Future of Neuropathy Treatment

As medical technology continues to advance, the Summus Laser represents a promising frontier in nerve pain management. Its ability to stimulate natural healing processes offers hope to countless individuals who have struggled with traditional treatment methods.

Conclusion

For those battling neuropathy, the Summus Laser provides a beacon of hope. By combining advanced technological innovation with a deep understanding of cellular healing, this treatment approach is transforming how we conceptualize and address nerve pain.

Patients interested in exploring this revolutionary treatment should consult with qualified healthcare professionals specializing in laser therapy and neuropathic conditions to determine their individual suitability and potential treatment outcomes.

LaserLab provides safe, effective, non-surgical pain relief and regenerative healthcare services. Our Pain Therapy Specialists use state-of-the-art Class IV Therapeutic Lasers to treat patients suffering from long-term pain. Our advanced laser technology reduces pain and inflammation, enhances healing, and increases circulation with no surgery, drugs, or side effects.

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A NEW PATH ON YOUR WELLNESS JOURNEY

Direct Primary Care (DPC) is an emerging healthcare delivery model designed to improve access, strengthen patient-provider relationships, and reduce administrative barriers that often delay care. In the United States, studies show that nearly 30% of adults report delaying medical treatment because of cost, insurance complications, or long wait times. Direct Primary Care aims to address these gaps by offering simplified, transparent medical services focused on prevention, continuity, and personalized care.

Unlike traditional fee-for-service healthcare systems that rely heavily on insurance billing, Direct Primary Care typically operates through a direct financial relationship between patients and providers. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, DPC practices often reduce administrative overhead by eliminating insurance claims processing, allowing clinicians to spend more time delivering patient care. Research indicates physicians in direct care models may spend up to 40% more face-to-face time with patients compared to traditional practices. Longer visits allow for more comprehensive assessments, improved chronic disease monitoring, and better preventive health counseling.

One of the most notable differences in some Direct Primary Care programs is the removal of recurring membership fees. Instead of paying monthly subscriptions, patients pay only when they receive care. This approach increases cost transparency and reduces financial barriers to seeking treatment. Healthcare cost transparency remains a significant concern nationally; surveys from the Kaiser Family Foundation show that nearly half of U.S. adults struggle to predict medical expenses in advance. Direct pay structures can provide clearer upfront pricing, helping patients make informed healthcare decisions.

Direct Primary Care also emphasizes proactive, whole-person care rather than reactive treatment. Preventive services such as routine wellness visits, early screening, and chronic condition monitoring are central components of this model. Evidence supports this preventive focus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 60% of U.S. adults live with at least one chronic disease, many of which can be managed more effectively with consistent primary care follow-up. Increased provider access may improve adherence to treatment plans, medication management, and early detection of complications.

Another key feature of Direct Primary Care is improved accessibility. Traditional primary care practices often face scheduling constraints, resulting in average wait times for appointments exceeding two weeks in many metropolitan areas. Direct care clinics typically offer same-day or next-day appointments and extended visit durations. Increased accessibility can reduce unnecessary emergency department utilization. Studies published in health policy journals suggest that expanded primary care access may decrease avoidable emergency visits by up to 20%, particularly for non-urgent conditions such as respiratory infections, minor injuries, and gastrointestinal concerns.

Virtual care and telehealth integration have further expanded access within Direct Primary Care models. Telehealth utilization in the United States increased dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic and remains widely used for non-emergency medical needs. Data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services indicate telehealth visits now account for approximately 15–20% of outpatient encounters in primary care settings. Virtual consultations are particularly effective for follow-up visits, medication management, mental health support, and evaluation of mild acute illnesses. Telehealth services may also improve continuity of care for patients with mobility limitations or transportation barriers.

Insurance processing in Direct Primary Care differs from conventional systems. Rather than billing insurers directly, some practices provide patients with a detailed medical receipt, often called a superbill, which can be submitted to insurers for potential out-of-network reimbursement. This process reduces administrative workload for clinics while still allowing patients to seek reimbursement when eligible. According to healthcare utilization data, patients with high-deductible health plans may particularly benefit from this arrangement, as out-of-pocket transparency helps them better manage healthcare expenses.

Direct Primary Care settings commonly treat a wide range of non-emergency conditions. These include respiratory infections, urinary tract infections, skin conditions, minor injuries, gastrointestinal symptoms, and chronic disease management. Preventive services such as vaccinations, routine physical examinations, and in-house laboratory testing are often available. Early evaluation and treatment of these conditions can prevent disease progression and reduce complications. For example, prompt treatment of urinary tract infections can significantly decrease the risk of kidney involvement, while early management of respiratory infections may prevent hospitalizations in vulnerable populations.

While Direct Primary Care offers many benefits, it is not intended to replace emergency medical services or specialized care. Patients experiencing life-threatening symptoms such as chest pain, severe breathing difficulty, or signs of stroke should seek immediate emergency treatment. Direct Primary Care functions best as a complement to comprehensive healthcare coverage, supporting ongoing preventive care, acute non-emergency treatment, and chronic disease management.

Healthcare experts emphasize that consistent primary care engagement is associated with improved health outcomes. Research published in population health studies shows individuals with regular access to primary care providers experience lower mortality rates, fewer hospital admissions, and better overall disease control. Direct Primary Care models are designed to strengthen this continuity by removing administrative obstacles that may interfere with timely care.

Patients considering Direct Primary Care should consult with a qualified medical provider to determine whether this care model aligns with their individual health needs, insurance coverage, and financial considerations. A healthcare professional can explain available services, appropriate use of telehealth, and when in-person evaluation is necessary. Seeking guidance from a licensed provider ensures that medical decisions are based on comprehensive clinical evaluation and evidence-based recommendations.

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Dupuytren's Contracture:

Why Xiaflex Injections Should Be Paired with Occupational Hand Therapy

Dupuytren's contracture is a progressive hand condition characterized by the thickening and tightening of the fascia beneath the skin of the palm. As the disease advances, tough fibrous cords form and contract, pulling fingers—most commonly the ring and pinky fingers—toward the palm. This contracture significantly impairs hand function, making everyday tasks from shaking hands to putting on gloves increasingly difficult.

While surgical intervention was once the primary treatment, collagenase injections, specifically Xiaflex (collagenase clostridium histolyticum), have revolutionized Dupuytren's management. These enzyme-based injections break down the collagen deposits forming the problematic cords. However, the journey to restored hand function doesn't end with the injection—occupational therapy (OT) hand rehabilitation plays a crucial role in maximizing outcomes.

Understanding Xiaflex Treatment

Xiaflex works by enzymatically dissolving the collagen cords responsible for finger contractures. The procedure typically involves an injection directly into the cord, followed by a manipulation procedure 24-72 hours later where the physician extends the affected finger to rupture the weakened cord. The immediate result can be dramatic—fingers that haven't straightened in years suddenly gain newfound freedom.

However, this freedom comes with responsibility. The tissue disruption from both the injection and manipulation creates a healing environment where new patterns of movement and tissue organization will establish themselves. Without proper guidance, the healing process may lead to suboptimal results or even recurrence.

The Critical Role of Hand Therapy

Post-Xiaflex occupational therapy serves several essential functions that significantly impact long-term outcomes:

First, OT helps maintain the range of motion achieved during the manipulation procedure. Without consistent stretching and movement, newly released tissues may contract again during healing. Therapists provide customized splinting programs, often including night splints that hold fingers in extension while sleeping and dynamic splints for daytime wear.



Second, therapy addresses the compensatory movement patterns patients developed while living with contractures. Many patients unconsciously alter how they use their hands to accommodate limitations. These ingrained habits don't automatically disappear when range of motion improves and can impede full functional recovery if not addressed through targeted retraining.

Third, professional guidance helps manage common post-injection complications. Swelling, bruising, and temporary pain are expected responses that benefit from therapeutic interventions like compression, manual edema mobilization, and modalities to control inflammation and discomfort.

Fourth, therapists provide progressive strengthening exercises once the initial healing phase passes. Many patients experience weakness after years of altered hand use, and rebuilding strength in newly available ranges of motion is essential for full functional recovery.

Evidence Supporting Combined Approach

Research consistently demonstrates superior outcomes when Xiaflex injections are paired with structured therapy programs. Patients receiving comprehensive hand therapy show greater long-term maintenance of extension gains, improved grip strength, and higher scores on functional assessments compared to those receiving injections alone.

Additionally, recurrence rates—a significant concern with all Dupuytren's treatments—appear lower when patients participate in ongoing hand therapy and adhere to home exercise programs.

Practical Considerations

Typically, hand therapy begins shortly after the manipulation procedure and continues for 8-12 weeks, with frequency tapering as progress is made. Patients should expect an active role in their recovery, including performing home exercises between sessions.

Insurance coverage varies, but most plans recognize the medical necessity of post-Xiaflex therapy. The investment in therapy often pays dividends through improved function and potentially decreased need for retreatment.

For optimal results, patients should seek hand therapists with specific experience treating Dupuytren's contracture. These specialists understand the condition's unique challenges and can provide targeted interventions that general physical therapists might not offer.

By embracing the partnership between Xiaflex injections and specialized hand therapy, patients give themselves the best opportunity to overcome the limitations of Dupuytren's contracture and return to the activities that matter most to them.

Innovative Therapies Group has certified hand therapists that specialize in specific treatments post Xiaflex injections for Dupuytren's contractures and will help you to regain function post procedure.

Types of Treatment Available with Physical Therapy

- Assessment and Evaluation Programs
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- Fall Prevention and Balance Retraining
- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Functional Training
- Gait Training and Balance Programs
- Manual and Massage Therapy
- Neurological and Neurodegenerative Retraining
- Vestibular Rehabilitation



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INGROWN TOENAILS: CAUSES, SYMPTOMS & EXPERT TREATMENT OPTIONS

By Dr. Andrew Franklin, DPM, Ph.D

An ingrown toenail is one of the most common and painful foot conditions that people of all ages experience. It occurs when the edge of the toenail — most often the big toe — grows into the surrounding skin rather than over it. While it may seem like a minor inconvenience at first, an untreated ingrown toenail can quickly become a serious problem, leading to infection and significant discomfort. At Ocala Podiatry, our experienced foot care specialists are dedicated to providing effective, compassionate treatment to get you back on your feet.

What Causes Ingrown Toenails?

Ingrown toenails can develop for a variety of reasons, and understanding the cause is the first step toward prevention and treatment. One of the most common culprits is improper nail trimming. When toenails are cut too short or at a curved angle instead of straight across, the nail edge can grow into the skin. Tight or ill-fitting footwear is another significant factor. Shoes that crowd the toes — such as narrow dress shoes or tight athletic sneakers — put constant pressure on the nails and surrounding skin, forcing the nail to grow in the wrong direction.

Genetics also play a role. Some individuals are simply born with naturally curved or fan-shaped toenails that are more prone to becoming ingrown. Trauma to the toe, such as stubbing it or dropping something heavy on the foot, can also disrupt normal nail growth. Athletes and individuals who are physically active on their feet are particularly susceptible due to repetitive pressure and minor injuries. Poor foot hygiene or hyperhidrosis — excessive sweating of the feet — can soften the skin around the nail, making it easier for the nail edge to penetrate the tissue.

Recognizing the Symptoms

The symptoms of an ingrown toenail typically begin gradually and worsen over time if left untreated. Early signs include tenderness or pain along the side of the toenail, redness of the surrounding skin, and slight swelling. As the condition progresses, you may notice increased pain when pressure is applied to the toe, such as when walking or wearing shoes. The skin around the nail may begin to harden and feel warm to the touch.

When the nail breaks through the skin, it creates an opening for bacteria to enter, which can lead to infection. Signs of an infected ingrown toenail include



increased swelling, drainage of pus or fluid, a foul odor, and the formation of overgrown tissue or skin folds around the nail edge. If you are diabetic or have circulatory issues, these symptoms demand immediate medical attention, as complications from foot infections can be severe.

When to See a Podiatrist

Many people attempt to treat ingrown toenails at home, but this approach often provides only temporary relief — or makes the problem worse. Home remedies such as digging under the nail edge or cutting a notch in the nail are not recommended, as they can damage the nail bed and increase infection risk. If you notice persistent pain, signs of infection, or if the ingrown toenail keeps returning, it is time to seek professional care.

At Ocala Podiatry, we strongly encourage patients to schedule an appointment at the first signs of an ingrown toenail. Early intervention not only relieves discomfort more quickly but also helps prevent the need for more invasive procedures down the road.

Treatment Options at Ocala Podiatry

Our podiatrists offer a range of treatment options tailored to the severity of your condition. For mild cases, we may gently lift the nail edge and place a small splint or cotton beneath it to guide the nail to grow above the skin. We will also provide guidance on proper nail trimming techniques and appropriate footwear to prevent recurrence.

For moderate to severe cases or recurring ingrown toenails, a minor in-office procedure may be recommended. This involves numbing the toe with a local anesthetic and carefully removing the problematic nail edge. In chronic cases, a small portion of the nail

root may be treated with a chemical solution to prevent that section of the nail from growing back. This quick, minimally invasive procedure has a high success rate and significantly reduces the chance of the ingrown toenail returning.

Prevention Tips

Preventing ingrown toenails is possible with a few simple habits. Always trim your toenails straight across — never curved — and avoid cutting them too short. Choose shoes that have adequate room in the toe box, especially if you are physically active. Keep your feet clean and dry, and inspect them regularly for any early signs of nail problems. If you have diabetes or poor circulation, a routine visit to Ocala Podiatry for nail care is an important part of protecting your foot health.

Contact Ocala Podiatry Today

You do not have to live with the pain of an ingrown toenail. At Ocala Podiatry, our team of skilled foot and ankle specialists is here to help you find lasting relief with personalized, expert care. Whether your condition is mild or severe, we are committed to delivering the highest quality treatment in a comfortable, welcoming environment. Contact us today to schedule your appointment and take the first step toward healthier, pain-free feet.

About Dr. Andrew Franklin, DPM, Ph.D

Dr. Andrew Franklin, DPM, Ph.D., moved from Essex, UK to the US in 2007, completing his post-doctorate in Organic Chemistry at FSU. He studied Podiatric Medicine at Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine and completed surgical residency at Cleveland Clinic. Relocating to Ocala in 2018, he opened Ocala Podiatry in December 2023. This board-certified podiatrist emphasizes patient education and teamwork. Married with two boys, he enjoys pickleball, sports, traveling, and outdoor activities.



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Kyphoplasty: A Minimally Invasive Solution for Vertebral Compression Fractures

By Brent Compton, MD

A vertebral compression fracture can be a life-altering event. Whether caused by osteoporosis, trauma, or a related condition, these fractures result in significant pain, reduced mobility, and a diminished quality of life. At the Interventional Pain Institute, Dr. Compton offers kyphoplasty — a state-of-the-art, minimally invasive procedure that can restore vertebral height, stabilize fractured bone, and dramatically reduce pain, often within days of treatment.

What Is a Vertebral Compression Fracture?

The spine is composed of individual bones called vertebrae, which provide structural support for the entire body. A vertebral compression fracture occurs when one or more of these bones collapse or crack, typically in the thoracic (mid-back) or lumbar (lower back) region. Compression fractures are most commonly associated with osteoporosis, a condition that weakens bone density over time and makes bones more susceptible to fracture — sometimes from something as routine as a cough, sneeze, or minor fall.

Symptoms often include sudden onset of sharp back pain, limited spinal flexibility, loss of height over time, and a stooped posture. In severe cases, multiple fractures can compress the spinal cord or nerves, leading to radiating pain, numbness, or weakness. Left untreated, vertebral compression fractures can worsen progressively and lead to chronic disability.

What Is Kyphoplasty?

Kyphoplasty is a minimally invasive surgical procedure designed to treat painful vertebral compression fractures. Unlike traditional open spine surgery, kyphoplasty is performed through small incisions using specialized instruments and real-time imaging guidance, making it safer and allowing for a much faster recovery.

During kyphoplasty, Dr. Compton inserts a hollow needle into the fractured vertebra using fluoroscopic (X-ray) guidance. A small device is then carefully inserted inside the vertebra. This device creates a cavity within the collapsed bone allowing a pathway for bone cement to flow which critically helps stabilize the vertebral fracture thus alleviating pain and risk for future fracture at that level. The bone cement (polymethylmethacrylate or PMMA), which hardens rapidly and stabilizes the fracture. The entire procedure typically takes less than an hour per vertebral level treated.



Benefits of Kyphoplasty

Kyphoplasty offers a range of benefits that make it an attractive option for appropriate candidates. Pain relief is often immediate and significant — many patients report a dramatic reduction in back pain within 24 to 48 hours of the procedure. By restoring the height of the collapsed vertebra, kyphoplasty can also correct spinal deformity, improve posture, and reduce the hunched appearance (kyphosis) that frequently results from untreated compression fractures.

The minimally invasive nature of the procedure means patients typically spend less time in the hospital — often going home the same day or the following morning. Recovery is considerably shorter than traditional surgery, and most patients are able to return to their daily activities within a few days. Improved mobility and reduced pain also allow patients to participate more fully in physical therapy and rehabilitation, which is essential for long-term spinal health.

Who Is a Candidate for Kyphoplasty?

Kyphoplasty is most effective when performed on relatively recent fractures — ideally within several weeks to a few months of the injury. Ideal candidates are patients who have not experienced adequate relief from conservative treatments such as bed rest, pain medications, or bracing. Dr. Compton conducts a thorough evaluation, which may include imaging studies such as MRI, CT scan, or X-rays, to determine the age and severity of the fracture and whether kyphoplasty is the most appropriate intervention.

Patients with osteoporosis-related fractures, cancer-related vertebral fractures, or trauma-induced compression fractures may all be candidates. However, kyphoplasty is not suitable for everyone. Dr. Compton will carefully review each patient's medical history, overall health status, and imaging results to ensure the procedure is both safe and likely to be effective.

Your Care at the Interventional Pain Institute

At the Interventional Pain Institute, Dr. Compton is committed to providing personalized, compassionate care using the most advanced pain management techniques available. From your initial consultation through your recovery, our team will work closely with you to develop a comprehensive treatment plan tailored to your specific needs and goals. We believe that effective pain management is about restoring quality of life — and kyphoplasty is one of the most powerful tools available to achieve that for patients suffering from vertebral compression fractures.

If you or a loved one is experiencing back pain that may be related to a spinal compression fracture, we encourage you to schedule a consultation with Dr. Compton today. Early intervention leads to better outcomes, and you don't have to live in pain.

Contact the Interventional Pain Institute to schedule your appointment and take the first step toward lasting relief.

At The Interventional Pain Institute, each patient's pain is thoroughly evaluated and a customized treatment plan is developed. Dr. Compton and his team are dedicated to treating every patient with the utmost respect and care, with a mission to help patients regain functionality and improve their quality of life.

The Interventional Pain Institute also places a strong emphasis on patient education. An informed patient is an empowered patient, and the team strives to provide as much information as possible about each patient's condition and treatment options.

With offices conveniently located in The Villages and Ocala, Florida, The Interventional Pain Institute is an excellent choice for those suffering from chronic or acute pain. Under the care of Dr. Brent Compton, patients can find not just relief, but also a renewed sense of hope for a pain-free future. Experience the difference at The Interventional Pain Institute today.

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CAREGIVING IMPACTS YOUR HEALTH

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

According to the 2023 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, the Alzheimer's Association reported that more than 11 million Americans provided unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias. These caregivers provided an estimated 18 billion hours valued at \$340 billion. Additionally, 59% of these caregivers report that their own health has suffered due to care responsibilities with high or very high levels of emotional stress.

Health of Caregivers Impacted

Most caregivers receive little or no support from their own families or other organizations and are basically on their own. There's been a growing trend over the last few decades of closing mental health facilities, early discharge of hospital patients, and implementation of managed care practices which causes a shift and burden to families and caregivers. This often results in financial loss, strain among families, and caregiver health issues that manifest due to increased stress.

Studies consistently show the following impacts on a caregiver's health:

- Higher levels of depression and depressive symptoms than in non-caregivers
- Depressed caregivers are more likely to have coexisting anxiety disorders, substance abuse or dependence
- Chronic stress in caregivers sometimes is associated with an increase in hypertension, inflammation and decreased immune function
- Caregivers who experience chronic stress may be at a greater risk for cognitive decline
- Caregivers report having a higher incidence of stress, weight gain, headaches, and back strain among other physical ailments and pain associated with caregiving

Women tend to be, more often than not, the primary caregivers. However, being a caregiver whether male or female affects your quality of life and increases the challenge of balancing your personal schedule with that of the intense, demanding focus needed to be a caregiver.



Resources and Tips Available

Caregivers tend to put others first and themselves last. It's not uncommon to see the impact of ongoing stress from caregiving sometimes results in anger and resentment. It's vitally important for caregivers to make sure they are taking care of themselves mentally, physically and socially. How can a caregiver take care of a loved one, if they are not being mindful of their own needs and health? Below are some resources and tips:

- Don't be afraid to ask for help from family members or close friends who could run errands
- Practice meditation and exercise to help relieve stress—set aside early morning or evening for yourself
- Do something socially just for you—see a movie, have lunch with friends
- Check into your office policies to see if you have family leave benefits

Call Hospice of Marion County for support from these programs:

Transitions Program at (352) 854-5200 – This is a community supported volunteer-based resource with caregiver support groups, respite for the caregiver, providing assistance whether in homes or assisted living facilities.

Nancy Renyhart Dementia Education Program at (352) 291-5138 – This program provides education for those caring for someone with dementia. It is provided at no charge and provides a three-hour workshop with tips and helpful caregiving resources, along with a Virtual Dementia Tour® that lets the caregiver experience dementia through the eyes of their loved one.

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HOSPICE OF MARION COUNTY

DARING GREATLY

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Life with God is a grand adventure. Along the way we may encounter unforgettable moments of joy or unthinkable times of disappointment. Either way, the journey requires faith, trust, and the courage to keep moving forward.

Faith rarely blooms in the safety of the familiar. Comfort zones feel secure, but they often keep us stagnant. Playing it safe—hiding our talents, avoiding risks, or clinging to the known—may feel good in the short term but it won't really grow our faith. Think of it like investing: nothing ventured yields nothing gained. When we step out, we exercise a muscle of trust that builds inner strength and confidence.

A life without faith requires no trust, and without trust, we miss the rewards that come from exploring something new.

Consider the stories of those who have dared greatly. I think of the disciples of Jesus—just ordinary people—fishermen most of them—who encountered a call that pulled them from the routine into something truly extraordinary. They left behind security for uncertainty, and in doing so, witnessed wonders!



Their lives were forever changed because they said yes to the unknown. Think of it, they walked with Jesus, witnessed miracles, and became part of the greatest story ever told. Life was not always easy, in fact most of them were martyred. But here we are, two-thousand years later, talking about their faith and courage.

For this young group of early Christians, the excitement wasn't just in the highs; it was in the deepening trust that carried them through lows.

When we lean into challenges rather than retreat, our faith grows and we discover a resilience we never knew we had.

One of my favorite quotes is from a speech given by President Theodore Roosevelt in the early 1900's. It is known as "The Man in the Arena," and it challenges the listener to step out of the grandstands and onto the playing field. Yes, you may get muddy—or even bloody—but you will not be like the poor timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Life is too short to always play it safe. Sometimes you just need to step out in faith and try something new—or even scary. When was the last time you took a leap of faith? The next time someone invites you to go somewhere new, have the courage to say, "Sure, why not!" The greatest joy of your life might be right around the corner, but you'll never know if you don't take that first step.

Those who step forward often look back in awe at how far they've come. Challenges refine us. They make us better. They push us to deeper levels of trust and commitment. Pain is not always bad... it is often a sign that we've been stretched.

So, my encouragement is to embrace a life of adventure. Take some risks. Try something new. Push yourself a little further today than you did yesterday. Don't quit, give up, or throw in the towel! The most exciting chapter in your story may be around the next bend.

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